

**Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species
Research Coordination Committee Meeting**

June 17, 2024
12:00 – 1:30 PM ET

Attendees

Lindsay Chadderton, *TNC*
Ashley Elgin, *NOAA*
Andrew Tucker, *TNC*
Mindy Barnett, *IL DNR*
Brook Schryer, *OFAH*
Alisha Davidson, *GLC*
Eric Fischer, *IN DNR*
Jesica Goldsmit, *Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs*
Doug Jensen, *MN DNR*
Kurt Kowalski, *USGS*
Branda Lafrancois, *NPS*
Rodrick May, *USFWS*
Amy McGovern, *USFWS*
Mike Langendorf, *Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority*
Debora DiCianna, *Lake Carriers Association*
Rochelle Sturtevant, *NOAA-GLANSIS*
Tim Campbell, *WI Sea Grant*
Katherine Wyman-Grothem, *USFWS*

Staff

Ceci Weibert, *GLC*
Sam Tank, *GLC*
Nichole Angell, *GLC*
Theresa Gruninger, *GLC*

Action Items

- GLC:
 - Compile notes from this meeting's discussion
 - Share date polls for upcoming committee charge meetings post Panel Spring meeting
- Chadderton:
 - Begin to develop a smaller working group that will scope out a research proposal on what related questions for the hunter/angler pathway

Notes

Meeting start-up

- Chadderton initiated introductions and reviewed the agenda
 - The agenda was rearranged to discuss the duck hunting/angling pathway first since some attendees had to leave early

Duck hunting/angling pathway discussion

- Chadderton gave an overview on the hunting/angling pathway and asked attendees if there are other potentially risky pathways to consider other than boating
 - The Western Regional Panel made a recommendation to the ANS Task Force to prioritize gaining a better understanding of the role of hunting/angling in spreading AIS
 - European frog-bit has begun to show up at lakes even with no boat launches present so there may be another force at play

- In Wisconsin, there is a general interest in understanding the hunting/angling pathway for AIS spread and they have done some surveys asking hunters and anglers questions such as “how many different waterbodies they hunt” and “how summer vs fall boating differs for hunters/anglers”
- This pathway of spread is different from typical boater behavior research
- Campbell gave a brief history overview of the research done in Wisconsin to better understand the hunting/angling pathway
 - Starry Stonewort showed up in Wisconsin in 2014 at popular hunting/boating lakes
 - They administered a survey of waterfowl hunters revealing that 70% of respondents knew that hunting equipment could transport AIS and that more than half hunted on multiple waters within 5 days. These findings confirmed this pathway as being risky and one to consider
 - Wisconsin implemented a Landing Blitz style event for waterfowl hunter outreach, which had success in some places but less so in more diffuse places, but there was still utility in the effort because they gained a lot of media coverage about the topic
- Jensen stated that there was historically an AIS prevention checklist for waterfowl hunters with guidelines that were approved by ANS Task Force
 - This checklist was updated in 2014 and these could be incorporated in future efforts
 - Wisconsin has been the leader in the educational efforts for hunters and Wildlife Forever has also done some work as well
 - Waterfowl hunters are unique because of the elliptical buoys they use, and they often cut *Phragmites*/plants to get into locations which can potentially facilitate spread
- A presentation was given by Hitzroth at ICAIS which outlined that Illinois is planning to administer a survey to hunters related to AIS spread
- While the European frog-bit Collaborative was run by Michigan, it had completed research surveying hunters
- Chadderton stated that previously this committee agreed that the hunter/angler pathway is a topic to pursue further and then opened the floor for jurisdictional perspectives
 - Campbell would be interested to see what Illinois is developing to see if it could be expanded to Wisconsin or other Great Lakes states if feasible
 - Kretlow said it’s a priority to Wisconsin and since 2016 they have been contacting and educating waterfowl hunters and have multiple educational resources available
 - Kowalski said this topic isn’t a priority from a *Phragmites* perspective
- Chadderton stated that a small working group will be developed to focus on this topic and if attendees are interested in participating in that, they should contact him
 - The role of this smaller working group would be to think through and scope out a research proposal on what related questions they would like to explore

Review of the draft Research Coordination Committee Charge

- Weibert provided an overview of the committee the charge and its history
 - In the past three years the Great Lakes Panel’s standing committees have been revamped and revitalized and are now looking to develop charges to clearly define who makes up each committee and give reasoning behind each committee’s work
 - These committee charges were drafted by GLC staff, and each committee will end up having their own charge, but all will likely follow the same framework
- The Research Coordination Committee charge includes 6 sections outlined below:
 - Mission statement: explains why the committee exists
 - Purpose statement: gives the reason behind the document existing
 - Membership: explains the expectations of each role within the committee including committee chair, committee vice chair, committee members (members, observers, and subject matter experts), and committee coordinator/GLC staff support
 - Meetings: explains the purpose and intent of meetings held by the committee
 - Committee work: will need to be developed by the committee

- This section may include both work in support of the GLP and work in support of external projects
 - Developing out this section will be discussed committee specific meetings in August, but as of current consensus agreed that this was on track
- Relationship with ANSTF: explores what the relationship between the Committee and ANSTF might look like
- Frequency of revisions and approval: a 4-year revision cycle is best fit however, this charge is not intended to be a workplan, but rather boundaries around the committee's work
- Discussion on all charges will occur at an all-panel member meeting in July 2024 and each charge will be discussed at smaller committee meetings in August 2024 with plans for charge adoption at the 2024 Fall GLP meeting
- Weibert opened the floor to suggestions or comments on the committee charge
 - Some regional panels have committee charges similar to this, but they are more similar to work plans rather than work boundaries
 - Because of how different the regional panels are, these charges aren't that translatable between them
- Next steps for these charges are to get approval on content and make revisions after future meetings

Ruffe control plan archival

- Weibert discussed the ruffe control plan memo which includes eight objectives including: population reduction, ballast water management, population investigation, surveillance, fish community management, education, bait fish management, and Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal
- The original goals and objectives of the plan remain relevant today
 - There are three specific actions that this group can take regarding its archival process including recommending for or against archiving or recommending revising the existing plan
 - These three options will be discussed at the meeting next week
- Weibert discussed the eight objectives of the plan and opened the floor for discussion from a research perspective
 - Jensen discussed whether the objectives of the plan were attempted and completed or not
 - Population reduction was attempted but unsuccessfully
 - Ballast water management efforts were successful
 - Population investigation was successful
 - Surveillance was successfully completed a lot in St Louis
 - Education and baitfish management are still active
 - Goldsmit mentioned that this group should consider the immense economic impact of ruffe
 - A database called Invacost quantifies the economic impacts of ruffe and recent publication used Invacost data to show that ruffe have the second largest economic impact (even more than zebra mussels)
 - Despite this large impact, Goldsmit could only find four papers in the literature about ruffe's economic impact
 - Chadderton thinks more research could be completed on the impacts of ruffe the key fisheries
 - Jensen mentioned that some papers have looked at ruffe bioenergetics and some have looked at predation on ruffe finding that only smallmouth bass ate them originally but over time other species have begun to as well
 - Historically, ruffe caused a decline in yellow perch but recently the species has rebounded
 - Chadderton is curious about impacts in combination with an increase in goby density
 - Tucker is curious about the potential for secondary spread as well as the potential for ruffe to invade the Mississippi River and compete with drum and sauger who share the same food source as ruffe
 - McGovern asked how doing this extra research and gaining more information would lead to management

- Chadderton said its more about understanding risk rather than developing management at this point time but translating research into management will be important to consider moving forward
- DiCianna had never heard of ocean-going ships being as worried about screens for prevention and their inspections are a little different since they don't come out of the water for inspections every year like Lakers will
 - It was the Canadian and US Lakers that really used screens and did research on the prevention side of things

Update on control of establish species project

- Davidson gave a verbal summary of the presentation she is giving at the Spring Panel Meeting
 - They completed literature reviews for 20 different invasive species and found a lot of species variation
 - High interest in goldfish and common carp existed
 - A variety of research gaps and gaps in control tools arose from this work, which will be discussed at the larger spring meeting
- Chatterton mentioned that if anyone is interested in seeing the literature reviews that they should email him, Ceci, or Davidson
- Weibert stated that there will be a full update on this work at the spring meeting next week and more information can also be found on the GLP website

Wrap up and adjourn

- Weibert discussed action items and gave reminders for the in-person meeting happening next week in Sault St. Marie, ON
- Chadderton closed out the meeting